(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government welcome the statement of the visiting Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Economic Relations, Mr. Oleg Davidov that the Russian Government had always nurtured the warmest relations with India and for this reason had declined to sell weapons to countries whose actions are inimical to Indian interests.

Vivekananda Rock Memorial

2401. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI :
SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA :
KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA :
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government have been invited to the news-item captioned "Vivekananda rock memorial may be lost for ever" appearing in the 'Times of India', New Delhi dated 16th September, 1996;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps being taken to protect the Vivekananda memorial from sea erosion and its preservation for all times to come?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Vivekananda Rock Memorial at Kanyakumari is maintained by the Vivekananda Memorial Trust. The deterioration reported in the news item is due to salt action. The Vivekananda Memorial Trust has taken action for protection of the Memorial with repellent silicon paint. As the Memorial is located in the sea, the problem of decay is to be attended to regularly.

Defence Budget Allocation

2402. SHRI T. GOPAL KRISHNA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Army Chief has called for making the Defence budget "responsive" to defence requirements and streamlining the process of allocation for the sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps proposed to establish a link between the national security strategy to be pursued and the weapons to be purchased before taking a decision to purchase a weapon system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI N.V.N. SOMU) : (a) and (b). No, Sir. The Chief of the Army Staff, while speaking, extempore, on the occasion of release of a book written by ex-Financial Adviser (Defence Services), mentioned words to the effect that 'the defence budget should be managed in a manner responsive to defence requirement'. There is a well defined system of estimating the defence requirements on the basis of the threat perceptions and contractual, obligatory, regular and recurrent commitments, in consultation with the Services Headquarters and Integrated Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, keeping in view the estimates of requirement and the security concerns projected by the Ministry of Defence, available resources and demands from other sectors, decide on the defence allocation.

(c) As a matter of policy, the requirements of defence are worked out in consonance with national strategic and security policy. While finalising the Acquisition Plan, interalia, the global and regional security environment as well as the technological environment assessment are also kept in view. The prioritised programmes of modernisation - purchase of weapon systems, for all the three Services, are carried out in a manner which is in line with our national policy and is designed to optimise the exploitation of the available resources.

[Translation]

Maudah Dam Project

2403. SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) the reasons for non completion of 'Maudah Dam Project' in Uttar Pradesh, which has been under construction for the last 21 years and which was expected to be completed within 10 years;

(b) the estimated cost, cost incurred till date and the amount paid as damages by the Government;

(c) the technical reasons for the cracks in the dam even before its completion and whether the Government have ordered any Inquiry into it;

(d) if so, whether the report is expected to be laid on the Table of the House soon;

(e) whether the cracks in the dam are due to the negligence of the officials;

(f) if so, the action taken against the guilty officials; and

(g) the time by which the project is expected to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) The Maudha Dam Project of Uttar Pradesh could not be completed so far mainly due to paucity of funds and land acquisition problems